Resolution on the situation of UNRWA

2018/2553(RSP) - 08/02/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation of UNRWA, the UN agency mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, GUE/NGL and Greens/EFA groups.

Parliament remained firmly committed to supporting UNRWA in its provision of vital services for Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, and expressed its concern at UNRWAs funding crisis, urging all donors to honour their promises to the Agency. The EU and its Member States, taken together, are the largest donor to UNRWA, contributing EUR 441 million in 2017. Members noted that the United States, as the largest single-country donor, has announced that it will contribute USD 60 million but withhold USD 65 million from a scheduled payment of USD 125 million to UNRWA.

Parliament welcomed the decisions made by the EU and several of its Member States to fast-track funding to UNRWA and urged the United States to reconsider its decision and to honour the payment of its entire scheduled contribution to the Agency. Whilst welcoming the contributions of member states of the Arab League to UNRWA, the resolution called on them to increase their commitment in order to close the funding gap. Any unexpected reductions in predicted donor disbursements to UNRWA can have damaging impacts on access to emergency food assistance for 1.7 million Palestine refugees and primary healthcare for 3 million, on access to education for more than 500 000 Palestinian children in 702 UNRWA schools, including almost 50 000 children in Syria, and on stability in the region.

Furthermore. Members encouraged the EU and Member States to mobilise additional funding for UNRWA in order to meet its short-term financial needs. However, they noted that any long-term solution to the recurrent financial shortages of the Agency can only be achieved through a sustainable funding scheme in a global multilateral framework, and the EU should play a leading role to establish such a mechanism.

Lastly, Parliament reiterated that the EUs main objective is to achieve the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both states.